

Oral History: Eugene Greenlaw Lubec, Maine

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Interviewer: Cameron Thompson

Eugene Greenlaw, born in 1949, has lived most of his life in Lubec, Maine. Greenlaw's first involvement in commercial fishing was working for a sardine factory in Lubec, which he did for 31 years, becoming the plant manager in 1998. He has fished commercially for lobster since in 1972, and fished scallops, sea urchins, and herring at different times throughout his career. This interview was completed as part of the University of Maine project, "Assessing Vulnerability and Resilience in Maine Fishing Communities," funded by Maine Sea Grant (PI: Dr. Teresa Johnson).

Interviewer: And how long have you lived in Lubec?

Eugene Greenlaw: 62 years.

Interviewer: Why do you live here and not someplace else?

Eugene Greenlaw: After I graduated from high school I was in the Navy. I did some traveling in the Navy and I found that home was the place I want to be.

Interviewer: All right. I'm gonna ask you some more details about your experience as a fisherman. But I'd like to get into some more background information first. Could you tell me about your family?

Eugene Greenlaw: My family. My father was sort of a fisherman, construction worker and he fished on weekends and that's how I learned actually to get started in the fishing business.

Interviewer: Did you come from a large family?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yes, there's the six of us in our family.

Interviewer: And where did your family originally come from?

Eugene Greenlaw: Lubec, and actually really Scotland.

Interviewer: No. Are you married?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yes.

Interviewer: Do you have children?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yes.

Interviewer: Is your wife originally from this area?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yes.

Interviewer: And are they involved in the fishing industry at all?

Eugene Greenlaw: Sort of. My son runs a barge for Cooks aquaculture and so he's in the farm business part of it. I have another son that's a prison guard and he also fishes when he has a chance, lobster fishes.

Interviewer: Is that commercially?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yes.

Interviewer: And your wife's family, anybody in your wife's family fish commercially?

Eugene Greenlaw: Her father fished commercially.

Interviewer: And was that in Lubec?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yes. And actually her grandfather fished commercially too. Lobstering.

Interviewer: Do you want your kids or grandkids to be involved in the fishing industry?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yeah, I think it's a great thing, I like it. If I like it I imagine I'd like to have them like it.

Interviewer: Yeah? So I'm just gonna ask you about the community a little bit broadly. So could you tell me about this community when you were growing up?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yeah, it was quite lively. Most everybody was dirt poor to start with because our family was six of them. But most every family had a lot of children. Back then there was sardine plants going. There was cat food place going. There was American canvas going, smoke sheds going, so there was plenty of activity. Lubec was actually like a beehive.

Interviewer: So the overall economy was based on?

Eugene Greenlaw: Fish.

Interviewer: Fish. You had the sardine plants and –

Eugene Greenlaw: Sardines, smoked herring, lobster fishing, but the sea urchin part of it and sea cucumbers, that was the thing that was born out of the scallop fishing.

Interviewer: Were there any other sorts of industries or sources of employment? Clamming?

Eugene Greenlaw: Clam digging. Clamming and scalloping.

Interviewer: What was the waterfront like here?

Eugene Greenlaw: Many buildings, lots of wharfs, lots of stores on Front Street. And, like I said, it was a very busy community and we all have like one wharf. Today there's probably – and that's been built within the last 20 years, but all the wharfs, I'll put it that way, in the town of Lubec has been taken down. There's only one standing place and that's no way to get to it by walking and that's the Smokehouse Museum across the street.

Interviewer: So what fisheries have you participated in?

Eugene Greenlaw: I've dragged the scallops, dragged for sea urchins. I weir fished, for herring. I was a plant manager for sardine factory and I lobster fish.

Interviewer: And which one did you get your start in? Which one did you do first?

Eugene Greenlaw: Well, I started lobster fishing, then of course I went in the Navy and stayed in the Navy. I've always kept my lobster license up. But I think the big thing was the herring business. Being involved with processing fish and herring was a big thing.

Interviewer: So in what year did you first start working in the industry as a lobsterman?

Eugene Greenlaw: I would say it was probably back in – to really say that I was into it, it was back in the, oh, early '70s, '72, '73.

Interviewer: How old were you when you started?

Eugene Greenlaw: Well, I actually started with my father when I was 12, but like I said that never amounted to too much. Just rowing around, pulling the trap or two, so at this point I would say probably since '72. Yeah, '72.

Interviewer: And when did you start on your own then? Or how did you get started on your own?

Eugene Greenlaw: Well, after I came back from the Navy because I had a love of lobstering so I bought a small skiff and started that way, pull them by hand. Back then it was wooden traps so it was easier to haul. And then I did a small thing for about six months, graduated from carpenter school. Didn't really care for carpentering and I went to the local sardine factory to pick up canning. And I got a job there and worked my way up to plant manager and I worked there 31 years.

Interviewer: Was it easy to get into fishing at that time?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yes.

Interviewer: And was it easy to get into the sardine factory then as well?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yes, at that time.

Interviewer: Maybe we can talk a bit about your experience of lobstering and then we'll go through and we'll talk about the other fisheries. We'll do one at a time. So you started fishing in about '72. What was the seasonal round like? When did you go out fishing?

Eugene Greenlaw: I've always maintained that. Usually start out probably June, July, August, September, October and ended up in the last probably the first week of November.

Interviewer: And what gear did you use? You started out with –

Eugene Greenlaw: I started off with wooden lobster traps which were more buoyant and we'll be talking about a story about that stuff later on.

Interviewer: What's that? What's that story?

Eugene Greenlaw: Well, I have a big thing, that why a lobster traps catch more lobsters, and you fish wooden lobster traps closer to shore than you did offshore. So I believe that once you start taking the bigger lobsters from offshore, which carry the eggs, need to be left alone. That's what I feel, but unfortunately that isn't how it goes, but we're very fortunate right now to have no codfish to have around.

Interviewer: How's that?

Eugene Greenlaw: Cause they feed on lobster.

Interviewer: Oh, all right. And where were you typically fishing then? You said –

Eugene Greenlaw: I fished from Quoddy Head to Baileys Mistake.

Interviewer: And how often and how long are your trips?

Eugene Greenlaw: Oh, they're just daily. Just a daily thing. I live right, handy there. I don't fish offshore.

Interviewer: Sort of getting through the change in the lobster industry over time, how important was it when you started?

Eugene Greenlaw: You got to –

Interviewer: How important was the lobster fishery to the community?

Eugene Greenlaw: Oh, to me you mean?

Interviewer: To you and the community.

Eugene Greenlaw: And community. Well, I lobster fish because it's a necessity, it was thing to do and knew how to do it. And I've always had to do it so I paid my bills and all bills in the community so if they got paid they made their money so they make their living.

Interviewer: Were there a lot of lobster fishermen?

Eugene Greenlaw: Not a whole lot of fishermen, nope. There was probably 20, 30 people here in Lubec, that lobster fished. And probably some of them not big time.

Interviewer: Have you seen that –

Eugene Greenlaw: And actually back when lobster fishing was – they were using wooden traps because we have so much tide here that they couldn't possible tend that many traps and to lug them out, lug them back because they're heavier, bulkier than the wire traps. So they fished less traps so more people fished less traps than what's going on in our daytime.

Interviewer: So what are you seeing happen now now that we're using wire traps? What's going on in this community?

Eugene Greenlaw: Well, there's more traps. They can fish more traps. They have hydraulics so they pull the traps easier. And a wooden trap has, like I said before, is more buoyant so when you go in to pull it, even if you pull them by hand, there's a big difference in a wire trap. Wire trap just like trying to pull a magnet off a piece of steel and it's that way all the way through the water. It's quite a drag to it. Like the wooden has more buoyancy so you pull a couple times on a wooden trap and it sort of kind of rises a little bit. Where a metal trap is same pull all the time.

Interviewer: So what were the markets like back then?

Eugene Greenlaw: Relatively good. Well, Lubec never really had a lobster buyer. In them days, we always had to take them to Cutler.

Interviewer: And you would do that yourself?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yes.

Interviewer: And how has that changed? What do you do now?

Eugene Greenlaw: I still do pretty much the same thing. I lug them to Machias Port now.

Interviewer: What do the rest of the lobster fishermen do?

Eugene Greenlaw: Oh, there's a few lobster fishermen that sell – we have a place that buys lobsters here in the bay now. And for the last probably ten years or so they have. But I'm a person that likes – once I get dealing with one person and one company, I seem to want to stay with them people.

Interviewer: And –

Eugene Greenlaw: And a lot of other fishermen feel – they all have their different places they want to sell to, you know? And it keeps it good. There's privacy reasons and dedication reasons and stuff.

Interviewer: While we're on the subject of markets, how did you deal with the 2008 lobster crisis? Was that an issue for you?

Eugene Greenlaw: The prices that was –

Interviewer: Yeah, that's what I'm referring –

Eugene Greenlaw: Prices very low. Course it hurt just like anything else if you just take something away that you're used to getting a little bit more for, yeah, but we just have to live with it I guess.

Interviewer: You didn't change your fishing practices?

Eugene Greenlaw: I didn't change no tactics, I didn't do no – just lived with it. Just like everybody else would.

Interviewer: And over the years, how have the stocks changed that you've seen for lobster around here?

Eugene Greenlaw: I actually see more lobster than I caught when I was younger.

Interviewer: Sorry? You –

Eugene Greenlaw: There's more lobsters available to be caught than there has been, in recent years.

Interviewer: What do you think –

Eugene Greenlaw: And I don't know if it's because, like I said, the wire lobster trap probably catches more lobsters. But because of the codfish stocks, the haddock stocks. Codfish, haddock and pollock, that's the three main things that really feed on small lobsters, especially when they're little buggers, about two or three inches long and they're crawling across the bottom. There was plenty of that stuff here

at that time so they would pick them off the bottom so it kept the numbers down. But now there hasn't been any of that stuff here for 10 to 15 years. And I think the number of lobsters are getting – so there's more female lobsters with eggs so they can do their thing.

Interviewer: Why don't we talk about a different industry then.

Eugene Greenlaw: Sure.

Interviewer: Do you want to talk about scallops? How'd you get into scalloping?

Eugene Greenlaw: Well, I never really did the scalloping per se. It's all I worked with the scalloper. And I think the laws are pretty good. The only thing is I found out that I'm very much against dragging. Dragging ruins the bottom and kills a lot of different things and it's just not a good policy to take care of your resources.

Interviewer: But you worked on a dragger or –

Eugene Greenlaw: Yes.

Interviewer: When was this?

Eugene Greenlaw: Oh, it was back in the '70s.

Interviewer: And how did you get started doing that?

Eugene Greenlaw: Just asked to go help one time. Just to be a helper.

Interviewer: How long did you do that for?

Eugene Greenlaw: Three, four years.

Interviewer: And when did you go fishing? What was the season like?

Eugene Greenlaw: It was in November to April I think it was. Some what, pretty close to what it is now. Although they start in December on the outside shore.

Interviewer: And where was this? Were you off a Lubec boat or –

Eugene Greenlaw: Yeah, yeah. Just an inshore fishery thing.

Interviewer: So why'd you stop?

Eugene Greenlaw: Sardine factories took on more fish and I worked with them and this was just a part time thing.

Interviewer: And all right, anything else on scalloping?

Eugene Greenlaw: Well, the sea urchin thing now pretty much the same thing. Actually, that's how a lot of the lobster fishermen was drawn in because the Japanese were paying really big bucks for sea urchins when it first started. And –

Interviewer: And when was that?

Eugene Greenlaw: That was back in the late '70s, '80s.

Interviewer: And is that when you got started?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yeah, like I said, I was just helping any of that stuff, just a part time thing. I have enough sense to know what goes on so –

Interviewer: Was that on a dragger or is that on a –

Eugene Greenlaw: Yeah, it was on a dragger. It was a 35, 40 foot boat. Actually, we were one of the first ones to really get started with the sea urchin thing. They were only paying \$0.35 a pound for them. Today's prices are up to \$2.00 I guess, maybe even more at times. Depends on what roe is, but we have to have a roe count of at least 15 to 18 percent. Now they're willing to take 10 or less. And they pay more money for that stuff. Well anyway, that's how a lot of the lobster fishermen got involved because what happened is there was a lot of people that got into this urchin business. It's wide open, paid big bucks so a lot of people, younger people, everybody jumped into it. Bought bigger boats, had bigger boats made and everything. And then all of a sudden the bottom fell out of it, new rules and regulations came. They petered out and so they weren't doing so good.

So then they needed something else to do and the lobster fishery at that time was open so anybody could join up in that so most of them all got licenses and they taught their crews how to take in lobster fish and they went out and bought licenses. So that's how this kind of got out of proportion, but if this hadn't happened there wouldn't be so many people in lobster fishing business.

Interviewer: You're attributing it like the urchining, it s –

Eugene Greenlaw: Urchining is what involved more lobster fishermen.

Interviewer: And when the bottom dropped out, when was that? When was that?

Eugene Greenlaw: Had to be in the '80s, late '80s or on the '90s I would say. Not good on dates.

Interviewer: And you think a lot of those fishermen went on to go be –

Eugene Greenlaw: To sea urchins and then needed something to do to pay for the boats and the bank's calling for them, want money and everything, so a lot of them bought lobster traps and licenses and went lobster fishing.

Interviewer: And what about you? Were you –

Eugene Greenlaw: I've been lobster fishing this whole time.

Interviewer: But how long were you doing the urchining thing?

Eugene Greenlaw: Probably three or four years.

Interviewer: About the same time as you're doing the scalloping?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yeah, up into the '80s, maybe a little bit more than the scallops.

Interviewer: So you mentioned you were involved with weir fishing for herring?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yeah.

Interviewer: When did that occur?

Eugene Greenlaw: Everything started probably about I would say probably '74.

Interviewer: How'd you get into that?

Eugene Greenlaw: I knew some people that was into it and I asked them if they was interested in having some help. They said no at the time and they had a bad scene down there, took out 90 hogsheads of fish and had a problem with them. So they lost them in the weir and they died. Not the whole bunch, but they had problems. So they needed people to come down to go to work and I was working for the sardine factory at the time so I went down on the boat, we sucked all the fish up, had divers come down. We cleaned the bottom on it because one thing about weir fish, one you get yourself established and you have fish coming in, it's a cycle thing. You know when they're coming and what time and the whole nine yards. You had to keep the bottom clean or the fish wouldn't come. If the fish die on the bottom, herring don't come back for years.

Interviewer: They don't come into the weir or they die?

Eugene Greenlaw: They don't come even into the cove. So if you mess up and dump a whole bunch of fish in the cove and leave it, you went back the next year you probably wouldn't catch any fish.

Interviewer: Were you part of the diving crew?

Eugene Greenlaw: I never dove, no.

Interviewer: No.

Eugene Greenlaw: No, I was there to help clean up and it was a stinky mess, but we got it cleaned up and then the fellas that owned it asked me if I was really interested in working for them so – I was down there pretty near 35 years.

Interviewer: And so where was this? This was –

Eugene Greenlaw: Blue Cove. Probably one of the best coves in this country for weir. It's caught many fish through the years and I will be very happy to say that probably 98 percent of the fish that left that cove being caught went to food dish. The sardines went to stringing herring and went to kippers. And some of the herring was used to pickling.

Interviewer: So that all came back here to be processed then?

Eugene Greenlaw: The majority of it, yeah, and what didn't go to Canada. Canada bought a lot of it too and of course that came back here as a finished product to this country. But a lot of it was here. Yeah, me being the sardine – I worked in sardine factory at that time and, like I said, I was plant manager for seven years. So I bought my own fish, which was really good. So I had a market for my fish. No, that was really nice, but –

Interviewer: So you ran this weir you said for 35 –

Eugene Greenlaw: Not personal. I had it for the last two years, but I worked with these guys for 35 years which is a long time.

Interviewer: Up from – yeah? Is it still operating?

Eugene Greenlaw: No. This is the whole story about this weir fishing. It takes money to have people come to work for you, so you have to pay them. It has to be a off season and you want to take out just a few hogsheads of herring, you wouldn't be paying them much. You know what I'm saying? So people don't work for nothing. And people don't understand that if they was in it for two or three years they'd get their money back. But then all the sardine carriers were sold off, factory sold off the sardine carriers, which is one of the worst things I ever heard of a sardine factory. They should have the carriers so they could go after fish any time, but they didn't. They didn't want to maintain them, see. So they figured well, there's plenty of boats around, we'll just sell our carriers off and we'll buy from these people that buy our carriers or something. Well, them people didn't really keep up a lot of maintenance on their stuff so they didn't go. So anyway, that's another story, but –

Interviewer: Well, so you didn't have any support for the weirs anymore.

Eugene Greenlaw: Right, right. There's market for our fish, but a lot of it was who's going to come and get it, you see what I'm saying? We didn't have no boats up around here to come get it except for Conners. And the Conners's had a lot of herring in Canada. They would tend to their people first and usually in this Blue Cover 300 where 300 hogsheads in one night was every given thing a lot of times. But yeah, just not having the help – I tried doing it by myself and with my two sons and I just couldn't do it. You need at least five people. To go into it right now it'd cost you close to a half million dollars. Put the twine on it, stakes onto it and everything and if you didn't get no hurricane, no big storm to blow you down, say that was almost every year, occurrence to and you ended up all winter long mending your twine and stuff. But there's really plenty to be had and actually that's shutting off herring, just running twine across the cove and shutting herring on the inside, put to the pockets on weir fishing. That's really the only way herring should be fished.

Interviewer: So could you see that coming back at all? Would it be –

Eugene Greenlaw: It would be nice to have it come back, but no and I'll tell you why. Purse seines and pair trawlers are keeping the fish at a minimum. And they're not allowing the herring to come ashore like they used to. And another thing that sort of really goes with this whole thing haddock, pollock, and codfish, they chase the herring. So a lot of times the reason why this cove caught herring is because these pollock, codfish and everything was after them so they came into shallow waters to get rid of these other predators. So that's another reason, but I blame it on the purse seiners and the pair trawlers. And even purse seiners don't like pair trawlers.

But the purse seiner, my big qualm with them is they go – let's say this is 200 hogshead of fish and purse seiners coming, he's got one carrier coming with him, maybe holds 100 hogsheads, right? He can hold 50 hogshead. So here comes this 200 hogsheads. He comes, oh, look at all these fish. So they take and go for the biggest bulk of fish, right? So instead of cutting through here and taking a slice off in it, they'll come and try to grab as much as they can. So then it takes awhile for them to pump and they got hydraulics and the push and the pull and the twine and the fish is getting strained, strained, strained. And they're pumping and they get this boatful and they fill themselves. Well, they have 30, 40 hogsheads left, where is it gonna go? They'll open it up, let it go, right?

So nine times out of time, they're where the herring, especially if get the spawn herring business, nine times out of ten they drop them herring. Where are they gonna land? They're gonna go on bottom where they'll lay their eggs. And what'd I just tell you about weir?

Interviewer: They don't come back.

Eugene Greenlaw: There you go. So I mean you just can't go to a bird's nest that comes back every year and keep stirring it up with your finger, expect that fish to come back. Not gonna do it, that bird come back. That's how I look at it. Just common sense.

Interviewer: Now I was hoping to get into your experience as a plant manager at the cannery. Can you sort of go through the story of how you started there?

Eugene Greenlaw: Okay, well, like I said, went to carpentry school after I come from the Navy. Didn't like carpenter school. Went down, applied for a job. I was hired. Actually I was put on a carpenter job for about six months. But anyway, had the job, but I was close to home. My father always worked away, I only see him on weekends so I says, "Well, I'm gonna have a family, marry and have kids, stay and do what I can in Lubec." So anyway, I went and applied for a job at sardine factory and got the job.

And as time went on I took first aid courses and did seminars and stuff like that, build myself up. Learned how to pack fish, I worked with about every woman there, learned their techniques, how to pack, basically how the tin should look and how it should be and everything. And then they asked me if I would like to go around and inspect the cans and do the first aid thing. So I did that and I helped still pick up and do whatever I was doing. And just learned everything about what there was and went in the cooking room and sort of learned my way of doing things is learn how much salt to put the herring in the water, if the herring had salt in them when they go out in dead ice or what. So you'd know what content salt to put in the fish to get a good flavor out of it. So learned them tricks.

Interviewer: So you're learning all -

Eugene Greenlaw: So they came to me and wanted to know if I'd be plant manager. I took that on because being a fishermen I knew a lot of other fishermen so they asked me if I'd buy fish the last three or four years that we did it.

Interviewer: So when did you become the plant manager?

Eugene Greenlaw: Goodness, I can't remember.

Interviewer: No?

Eugene Greenlaw: I can't remember what years that was.

Interviewer: You can't? You don't have to tell me, it's okay.

Eugene Greenlaw: It was probably '98 or something like that.

Interviewer: Do you mind telling me which plant this was?

Eugene Greenlaw: Peacock Canning.

Interviewer: So how long were you the plant manager for?

Eugene Greenlaw: About seven years.

Interviewer: So –

Eugene Greenlaw: And then after that we went into processing, raised salmon. We did that for three, four years.

Interviewer: You did that? Did you –

Eugene Greenlaw: Yeah, I was production manager on that one.

Interviewer: And was that working for a company or *[Crosstalk]* –

Eugene Greenlaw: Yeah, no, no, I was still working for Peacock, but what they did, there was like one, two, three – well, actually when the salmon first started coming in, we did a lot of different – cause private owners got into this and what happened with the private owners cause Connors Brothers and a lot of these other people got into supplying the food for the salmon. But the prices went down and stuff like *[xx0:32:25]*, a lot of these private owners didn't have the money to pay for the feed. Well, they got behind in that. So then bigger companies came in and bought these guys out.

Interviewer: And one of those companies was Peacock Canning?

Eugene Greenlaw: No, Peacock never got into it– he just processed the fish. So you had –

Interviewer: But that's how you were involved was –

Eugene Greenlaw: What's that?

Interviewer: But that's how you were involved in the managing of the processing?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yeah, I actually was doing that about the same time I was doing sardines too so I was kind of doing one to the other. And we processed the sea urchins too for awhile.

Interviewer: So I was wondering if you could just generally talk about the sardine industry, how since you've been here, in your experience how you've seen it progress and decline with the closings?

Eugene Greenlaw: Well, actually probably when I started it was declining starting then. Declining because they wasn't paying attention to what was going on.

Interviewer: How do you mean?

Eugene Greenlaw: For example, Connors Brothers in Canada, they put their money in a machine that would separate the big fish from the little fish so they could take and pack what they wanted. So that gave them an opportunity to still just bring fish up a belt and let the packers pack up in it. Then there would be a lot of waste to that fish, right? So a lot of it got wasted because it wasn't the right size to put in the can, but if they had taken, like Connors did, they'd separate them out and the great big fish that came with the little fish, they were put into canned kippers or

something. So they got all their fish product. There was not much waste to it except the heads and the guts, it's all used up.

And another thing was machinery. Connors went to – instead of using scissors in the hands, they didn't get away with that, but they used a machine that the women take and put the fish in it, hit the buttons and a cutter would come down in the can, cut the fish so it will fit in the can right. So it needed to be modernized. These people here didn't do that.

Interviewer: There wasn't any updates then at all?

Eugene Greenlaw: No. No, it was the same pretty much once they – actually years before I started, they cooked their fish on a flaker and steamed them and went with the flakes and they bought them out and dumped them all on the table and the women didn't use scissors back then, they used the thumbs to cut heads and stuff off, put fish in the can because it was all cooked.

Then they went to a raw pack. It's more or less what they do today. Women use scissors and they cut the fish and put it in the can and then it was taken in and dipped in a brine like I was saying. Salt added to whatever freshness it was. And it was steamed and put through a seal machine and raised.

Interviewer: Actually I've heard this story, what happened to the waste products then?

Eugene Greenlaw: For awhile it went to, if there wasn't enough lobster fishermen to buy it, it went to a landfill. And they made mulch with it or something, I don't know.

Interviewer: And so what happened to the canneries then? I mean they closed but –

Eugene Greenlaw: Well, lack of workers. A lot of the younger people didn't want to stand all day long and pack the cold slimy fish, wanted to sit at a computer or whatever. People lost interest in that kind of work. That's where the modernization that came up would probably would have been much better. While I was in the Navy I had an opportunity to go to Germany and go to their sardine factory. And their sardine factory was spotless. The floors were made with tile and it was shiny. There were vats that they held the fish in, which we called pickle packs, was like glass. You could see through them, could see the fish. And the fish was actually I believe at that time, even in the '60s, was cut by machine. And they had two or three belts come out and the ladies dipped like mustard or oil or some kind of pickling spice or something like that. They would put that in the can by hand.

So you got a huge assembly line with just ladies doing that instead of having a machine do it. Our way of doing it was go to raise, get their mustard and they had it on a spigot. This is how old fashion it was, had it on a spigot, they had a pump downstairs. While the machine's going around sealing the spigot was going all the time so if we get a can that got damaged and plugged the thing up, the spigot would be running mustard and nothing was turning. So just mustard just run out till someone comes and then pick it up. And a lot of other times too there was more mustard on the covercain then it would squirt it up so I could see probably where they would have a person do that, get the right amount into it and there'd be no waste. That's probably one of their better things that I saw. But modernization was never introduced into the sardine factory till Stinson's.

Stinson's, they had a machine that cut the fish and they went into the frozen things, but Bumble Bee bought them out. You probably know that. I guess

Bumble Bee's bought everybody out. Even King Oscar in Norway, from what I hear.

Interviewer: Yup. So when you were working as a manager, were you also doing the lobstering and the weir fishing at the same time? Just do that in the summer?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yeah, weir fishing, yeah. Yeah. I'm a busy boy, yeah. Like I am now. You've had a hard time keeping up with me.

Interviewer: Well, also I know you have another business then was wondering if you could talk about that.

Eugene Greenlaw: Chocolate business?

Interviewer: Yeah, sure. So when was this established?

Eugene Greenlaw: Actually I think it was established actually ten years ago. And I didn't think that I would probably be looking for another job at the sardine factory. Actually probably the best job I ever had was running the sardine factory. But anyway, as time went on we ended up just processing salmon. And of course I'm getting a little older and my hips bothered me and my legs was bothering me and I said, "Well," and I love to cook so I said, "Well, maybe there's something else to do besides just fishing or maybe there's something I can do after fishing." Here I am. I'm in the chocolate business, which has been building.

Interviewer: And you opened it –

Eugene Greenlaw: It's been taking me ten years and I think we're doing pretty good for a fellow that has no business mind at all.

Interviewer: So can you just basically describe for the recording what services and goods you provide?

Eugene Greenlaw: The chocolate you mean?

Interviewer: Yeah, or what's the name of this place to start with?

Eugene Greenlaw: It's Bayside Chocolates. I invented the peppermint patties, I do needhams, truffles, turtles, bunch of – my friend here which helps me in the chocolate thing is she invented orange delight and I had the lemon delight. So it's not only just – I bring in my workers and they all help do what I'm doing too. So I'm doing it for the girls mostly. I try to make my own living lobster fishing and I enjoy mostly of having people come in, try my chocolate and roll their eyeballs up and buy more, and come back again. That's what I like. I'm living the life I want I guess. Although sometimes it's very hectic to get here and be able to tend to my traps and I know that's where the money's at. It's in the lobster business, I have a love for cooking and chocolate just gives me an outlet for experimental stuff.

Interviewer: And who's your customer base? Who do you –

Eugene Greenlaw: I have walk-ins, I have local people. One of the first ladies, I don't know if you want me to get into stories or not, but one of my first ladies that I can really talk about is a Danforth woman, she lived to be 106 years old. And probably back when I first started ten years ago, she would come down to shop and say, "Eugene, I'd like to have the chocolates. I love your chocolate and I like the dark chocolate." And she says, "I can't eat nuts. I don't like solid stuff." She

says, “ I want something I can eat that’d be soft and sweet.” And I was on my way to Calais one night. I told my wife, I said, “Ah, I know what I’m gonna do for Ursula,” I said, “I’m gonna get these marshmallows at Walmart and we’ll dip in and see how she likes that.” And she had them by her bedside even when she died. And actually when she went in the nursing home, I put them on a stick and dipped them in a stick so she wouldn’t get her fingers all chocolate, get it on the sheets. A little bit of what I’m like I guess.

Interviewer: All right. Why don’t we talk about the community more generally? So trying to assess what’s happening here. How would you say that infrastructure is in the community for a fishermen? Does it meet their needs?

Eugene Greenlaw: It’s very poor. Fishermen have to fight to do what they’re doing. We don’t really have a whole lot of kinds of facilities. It’s a struggle to be a fishermen. We don’t have any really great wharfs to go. We didn’t really no real, real good places to tie up. So every time you get a big storm come or something like that, you either take your boat to Canada or Eastport or find some place to store your boat. That’s probably why I never really get into having a big boat. I have a boat that I can haul 130 traps a day. It’s small. It’s economical. It’s a one man band. It’s all situated up. I have hydraulics on it. I just turn sideways, I bait my bait bag, everything’s very handy dandy and it’s just a one man Working thing. Where a lot of bigger boats go out and they need people to go with them and the sternmen and all this other stuff. I bait my bait bag prior to leave, so I ain’t got to do it while I’m out there, so everything’s all set to go, but our big problem is no dockage, no really great protection. We have some real good areas, beautiful areas to develop and make it a better fishing community. But no one’s got the bucks to do it with.

Interviewer: What do you see as necessary? What would you improve?

Eugene Greenlaw: Well, we need some sort of a harbor built of some sort. And with that and if we can – I have a problem because I keep going off on these other things, but we – We have a need for buyers, people come in and buy a product. There’s big opportunities for different people doing things. I have a fellow down here that’s – and the old Peacock place, he’s really desperate for a place to – he has sea salt. You must put that in the fishing community too. It’s a product of the ocean and he’s in desperate need of finding a new home to set him up to do his thing, which would be great. We just need things other than little trucks coming in and buying sea urchins or stuff like that. Back to this German thing here, when I was in Germany, their people have luxuries where our people never did.

Interviewer: Are you talking about the fishermen?

Eugene Greenlaw: I’m talking about cleanliness, the way the fish is taken care of, the porch that they have and Canada is the same way. Canada’s government, they put their workers ahead of their – they make sure that there’s people – explain one thing. We had a hurricane.

We had a hurricane come and it destroyed two or three, four weirs. And we had to take and do them weirs ourselves out of our pocket. While we’re gathering around getting things ready, the Canadian government bought every one of them weir fellows that lost the weirs, the boats, the twine, they bought everything, put their people back to work so Connors is in that fashion.

Interviewer: Do you consider this place a fishing community today?

Eugene Greenlaw: Well, it does have fishing and I can't say that it's a fishing community. No, I think it's a tourist community coming to see the past of the fishermen.

Interviewer: What do you see as the major strengths of the fishing community?

Eugene Greenlaw: No, right now I don't see any strength in any of the community as far as fishing goes. I mean the lobster fishing has picked up some, but you have to have strength when you have docks and places to go. Another thing it is you got to bring your stocks back. That's another one that we get into. The stocks, the more I see of this pair trawling business is, I know it's good to have bait to take and put in my lobster trap, but I despise putting haddock in my lobster trap, in my bait bags with herring, to put in with herring. I've seen a lot of that the last couple of years and I know it's coming from pair trawlers.

Interviewer: How do you mean? Is it you –

Eugene Greenlaw: They're dragging the bottom. And they take whatever's on that bottom and they're there longer scooping it up and maybe codfish, haddock, or pollock or hake or whatever it is, but they're catching a huge number of things other than herring. And I really don't believe that we should be dragging the bottoms for herrings. One thing the purse seiners chase them at night when they're on top of the water, and then we have pair trawlers chasing them on the bottom during the day. And they're sucking up all these other fish and they say, "Well, there's a limit on doing this, a limit on doing that." I want to tell you something, when you taking drag for an hour, 45 minutes, whatever you got in that bag is not gonna be good to throw back overboard. And here a week ago I probably had six to seven haddock, small haddock, probably six to seven to eight inches to a foot long in each one of my boxes and I bought six boxes. So that's how many haddock? Probably 30 haddock things on the thing and my box so can't imagine what it would be like with a 100 people buying this. So there's all this haddock and how you gonna bring these stocks back when you're scooping up the baby ones?

Interviewer: So switching back to the community. What do you see as the major threats facing the community?

Eugene Greenlaw: Major threat. Low prices.

Interviewer: Low prices in what regard?

Eugene Greenlaw: Low prices on our products like lobsters. A year or so ago you quoted what did I do, had lobsters \$2.00 a pound. Well, scallops was that way too here a few years ago. It about \$4.00 or \$5.00 a pound, most people used to getting \$7.00 or \$8.00 a pound so you keep on going to do that, but – next question.

Interviewer: And in what ways do you think fishermen can adapt to threats or challenges?

Eugene Greenlaw: Well, I guess we've adapted already. I mean our sardine factories here are gone and there's still people fishing. There's still people dragging. So I guess we're going through our worst stage I would say right now. If our stocks come back and we can attract some buyers. What would really help this town right now to me is if someone would come in and either start a sardine factory which I really believe that that can be done and done right and put out probably one of the best products there is in the world.

And we need to experiment with the model and the sardine, but we need to experiment with other things to put in cans and another thing that we should be doing is instead of lugging our lobsters to here and there, we should be buying them and processing them here. Take the meats. I mean we can now dissect our lobsters and take the meat and freeze it and can it, do this and that with it. It's something we could be doing in this community right here. Now that could be started, could put more people to work, bring more people in. There's actually not many Lubecers left in Lubec as far as per se people being here – it's becoming more of a tourist ghost town in November to May. That's what it's getting to be. Come November, there'll be a hardware store opened. I'll be open and there's a Paw's Cat Place and they'll be taking cats. We're gonna be the only three places that's gonna be opened from now until May at least.

Interviewer: Who represents the interest of commercial fishermen in this port? Is there a –

Eugene Greenlaw: Represent?

Interviewer: Is there a group or an individual.

Eugene Greenlaw: There's nobody. Well, there is a Quoddy – oh, what they call it? Quoddy something Fishmen's Association or something like that. I don't belong to that, but it's mostly for scallops for the day. There's no lobster fishermen thing. The Quoddy Bay thing or whatever it is, I can't remember now, they have a little committee thing that they talk about sea urchins and scallops. And they've got actually some of the bay closed off for places at least time so that – used to be when this place opened up –

There's great nutrition in the water out here for the scallops and things. But when you have 120 boats in one little area, it don't take long to take all the resources away. And actually I think personally if people really want to get into keeping our stocks and everything, I think they ought to go right down the middle of everything and somehow or another fence it off and just leave an area. Reach straight down through the whole bay that no one can drag, put a pen in or do anything. We need a place for our resources to hide and develop. That's what I think.

Interviewer: Are fishermen well organized in Lubec?

Eugene Greenlaw: No, no. I don't think there's a fishermen organized anywhere. Seem to be our whole problem, we're secretive. We don't want no one knowing what we're catching, what we're getting for them and the only thing we will do is if you broke down we'll help tow you in.

Interviewer: So that's my next question.

Eugene Greenlaw: Pretty much it.

Interviewer: If you could characterize the relationship between fishermen –

Eugene Greenlaw: Most everybody knows we're there for them if they're in trouble, but fishermen, like I said, very secretive.

Interviewer: And what about fishermen between different communities, say Lubec and Eastport?

Eugene Greenlaw: Well, there's a lot going on there, but I sort of draw the line and look at it in a different perspective. A lot of people resent - like people from Eastport are up above fishing in Lubec waters. They're fishing a lot of traps and they're getting tangled up and then calling on this guy and this guy and this guy- but you've got to look at it in a different way. Come dragging season, our guys, a lot of them, have times and they do - I mean we mix back and forth so we drag scallops and stuff in their water. So. That's how I look at it.

Interviewer: And how would you characterize the relationship between fishermen and non-fishermen in this community?

Eugene Greenlaw: What do you mean by that?

Interviewer: Is there any conflicts between fishermen and non-fishermen?

Eugene Greenlaw: No, I don't think so.

Interviewer: No.

Eugene Greenlaw: No. Actually, there's been a couple people come in my shop and they just apply here awhile ago this year for a recreation license for lobstering. I help get their little five little traps up, teach them a little -

Interviewer: Oh yeah?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yeah, they enjoy that. But the only thing I don't like about it is if they catch more lobsters and they sell them to my customers. But everybody has I think a right to fish. But, like I said before, the wire lobster trap has made it easier for the fishermen to fish, believe me. If it was wooden, they wouldn't be fishing as many traps. And you've got to look at it a lot of different ways. I hope another lobster fishermen doesn't see this than come down and cut my throat. But anyway, a wooden lobster trap, if it gets cut off, is gonna go back to nature.

Interviewer: It's gonna decompose.

Eugene Greenlaw: Yeah, it's gonna decompose. Worms are gonna eat it up and it's just gonna go away. Wire lobster trap? I just bought a lobster trap here the other day, I had to restock my stock and got a good buy on some lobster traps. And one trap is 12 years old. And if I shined it up, you wouldn't know it wasn't brand new. So imagine what that's like sitting on the bottom, how long it been sitting there.

Interviewer: Has fishermen's access to the waterfront changed in Lubec? Has waterfront access -

Eugene Greenlaw: Has the waterfront changed?

Interviewer: Has waterfront access been an issue or has it changed for fishermen?

Eugene Greenlaw: I haven't heard too much of it.

Interviewer: No?

Eugene Greenlaw: No. Well, yeah, there's two or three places where homes been built that they don't allow you to - not like now where I live down in Quoddy Head, there's a road goes down to Herring Place Cove and fishermen always took down that road to go see what the weather's like on the outside shore before they come - I

mean that's quite a ride from cove, that's what, a mile and a half, two miles, maybe two and a quarter miles to go down and around the head to take and find out if the weather's gonna be fit for them to haul their traps or drag, whatever. And these people bought a home in there and they shut that road off so people can't get in to turn around. It's a headache to go do that. If the state would kind of purchase that little piece of land so we can turn around, then that would be really a great thing. Could be even life saver. But there is a few places. I mean guys that's going wrinkling and stuff like that, it's hard for them to get to go. And some places people walk across other people's properties to go clamming, clam digger. That makes it very hard. I think all fishermen ought to be, if they're commercial, ought to be able to go anywheres across to get to anything to make a living.

Interviewer: So besides fishing, who else is using the waterfront?

Eugene Greenlaw: It's tourists and I clam once in awhile. And I'm not commercial anymore, but I have a recreation clam license, I go clamming. And I know there's as many other people that do – local people. So we have to go out across - most places - have to go across somebody else's property to get to your coves, more or less.

Interviewer: Yeah, so the docks and that sort of – but down here at the docks and the waterfront, has that changed or is it – you said tourists. Are tourists using that space? Are recreational fishermen using that space?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yes. We're all using that together.

Interviewer: How important is or has been tourism to this community?

Eugene Greenlaw: It's the most important thing we've got going right now.

Interviewer: Why's that?

Eugene Greenlaw: I wouldn't have a job. Sharon wouldn't have a job. Annette wouldn't have a job. Chocolate people that make – that has chocolate like that, other things in here, like cards, they wouldn't have a job. Have salt in here, they wouldn't have a job. So tourism is becoming the only viability thing that Lubec has to offer.

Interviewer: And what about aquaculture? Is aquaculture been important to Lubec?

Eugene Greenlaw: Aquaculture is a real disappointment to me, big time.

Interviewer: How do you mean?

Eugene Greenlaw: I think that us being United States citizens and being in our territorial waters should never let another country come in and raise fish in our waters. I think we ought to be doing it ourselves. I despise and I'll put it this way, and my son works for them too, I despise any of these outsiders that comes to our country that uses our water space. Because I really feel deeply that there's people in this country, our state, our government that's quite capable of raising salmon, haddock, pollock, codfish, anything we want instead of relying on other countries coming in and doing that. And then taking their product away to be processed. Of course they have this place down here at Bucks Harbor, they do a little bit of fish there, but 90 percent of the fish is going to them. And actually, from what I've heard, they don't even use the fish out of our waters. They take fish to Canada and truck it down. They do it down there.

Interviewer: Down in Cooks?

Eugene Greenlaw: That's down in Bucks Harbor.

Interviewer: And –

Eugene Greenlaw: So I think personally and really if our government and our state and if anybody has any real concern is somebody ought to be pushing the button to get our people involved in the fish business. Because it's gonna be just like everything else, our shoe companies our gone, our industries' gone. We're an industrial nation. We've always been that way and we should maintain ourselves as being that way or we're not gonna make it. We're going down the tubes. See it in the Wall Street or any place, that's because we are not putting out the products that we need to put out to keep this country to where it can keep it going. I think I take the politics out of it. Grab their ass, forget about the pride and start doing something. Too much politics involved in the fishing business, in any kind of business. I know being a chocolatier that paying state taxes – I'm paying Workman's Comp, I'm paying Unemployment Taxes. I'm paying federal this and federal that and taxes, tax that and I can tell you, I'm doing it right to the T and anybody can come in and look at my book any time they want to. And it's very hard. It's been a struggle for ten years and we've worked our asses off to try to make any money to make a go of this and we are struggling.

Interviewer: How do you feel about tourists and people from outside the community who want to move here?

Eugene Greenlaw: Love it. Bring them in. I try to encourage it. The only down results we have, we have one of the most beautiful places on the continent. We are so far away from everything that people come in, they fall in love, but they don't look at the whole realm. Our major hospital is in Bangor, which is 105 to 110 miles. We have small hospitals that in a half hour reach in Machias. An hour to Calais. The closest Walmart is 62 miles away. And we have one grocery store and a couple little small gas stations.

Interviewer: So people don't realize that when they move here?

Eugene Greenlaw: They don't. They come in here, they see how beautiful it is. They say, "Oh, I got \$200,000.00 or \$300,000.00 stuck in my back pocket. I'd like to go spend it." So they come up here, fall in love, come in here and buy a place, get it all fixed up, fall in love with it. And say, "God, it's far away." And most of the people have a little age on them, so they need medical needs and stuff like that right there and they're not gonna get it here. We could patch them up, send them in an ambulance.

Interviewer: Are there any opportunities for fishermen here to be involved in tourism or aquaculture?

Eugene Greenlaw: I'm it.

Interviewer: You're it?

Eugene Greenlaw: I'm it.

Interviewer: You're involved in tourism– you say –

Eugene Greenlaw: I'm in the tourist business, I'm in the fishing business.

Interviewer: Okay. And –

Eugene Greenlaw: And I think Phinney’s up the road – he’s not so much in the fishing business, but he’s a processor and he’s making pies and stuff like there. He’s in the tourist business too.

Interviewer: How affordable is the housing situation here?

Eugene Greenlaw: I think we’re considered a place to come to buy a place. Actually prices have come down since we’ve had these hard times. But there’s still buildings for sale that’s not really too expensive.

Interviewer: Has it changed over the years? It’s come down recently, the prices have come down?

Eugene Greenlaw: Oh, no, no, no. They’ve gone up actually. Gone up in the ‘90s and the early 2000s, but when I was growing up, if you spent \$75,000.00 for a home, you’d be getting luxury. Most places \$25,000.00, \$30,000.00, \$40,000. So you take a \$75,000.00 home, it’s something else. \$100,000.00 and you’re rich.

Interviewer: What do you feel have been the most critical changes in the community since you’ve been here?

Eugene Greenlaw: The loss of sardine factories. Is that -

Interviewer: Yeah.

Eugene Greenlaw: There’s no work.

Interviewer: Can you – yeah.

Eugene Greenlaw: There’s no work because there’s no adaptation to people in our day and age.

Interviewer: What do you think the community will look like in ten years?

Eugene Greenlaw: Here look like in ten years?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Eugene Greenlaw: Goodness, I couldn’t tell you. I couldn’t tell you. You get some people that really spends big, big bucks in restaurants here and if I had \$100,000.00, I damn sure wouldn’t be putting it in a restaurant and only having just tourism for five to six – well, it wouldn’t even be six, be five months a year. You’re just not gonna make the money back that quick unless they’re doing something I don’t know nothing about.

Interviewer: What would you like the community to look like?

Eugene Greenlaw: What’s that? How would I like to see the community?

Interviewer: Yes.

Eugene Greenlaw: I would like to see a sardine factory put in. I would like to see a lobster processing plant put in. And I think that them could be made to work and I would like to see it United States of America owned and operated. And I think

if you did that, you'd be putting fishermen back to work. I think that if you took pair trawls out of the water, bought the boats from them, and made them very healthy and wealthy that in 10 to 20 years you would have a little bit less lobsters, but you'd have more of your haddock and that stuff coming back.

But you cannot put big boats in the water with fish finding sonars and all this and that and scoop up your fish and then put laws onto them. Of course here's an example, you're only allowed 1,000 pounds of haddock, but you can keep gray sole, right? So you go out and catch your haddock, then you go over here and catch your gray sole. But you got haddock and the gray sole and you're dragging for an hour so then you're out there with a stick with a nail onto it throwing your haddock all overboard. How you gonna get your resource back from doing that? These people need to do is go out and let them drag so many hours and when they come in, oh, what do you think? Oh boy, bring it home. I've never been on a dragger out to sea. I see it on TV, put it on and these people picking the stuff up from when they brought it in and they take a stick and they drive a nail in it and put it up to a stick to see if it's the right size. And it's either overboard or down the hold.

I mean where you going? You just don't go in your chicken pen and pick up the prettiest chickens and hit them in the head and by and by you ain't got no chickens in the henhouse. You see what I'm saying?

It just doesn't make any sense at all if you're trying to take and bring back your stocks. You've got to start at the very beginning, use common sense to do it. And I get very upset, I never can take it. But it's true, just can't – I'll tell you a story. Back in the '60s, before I even went in the Navy, went out one day handlining with my father. We was out off in Quoddy Head and we was drifted along. See these seagulls popping down and look around and there's all these herring floating around, just far as the eye could see, herring floating around. And I said, "Dad, what's this?" He says, "Herring." He said, "Purse seiners have been out," and at that time we had a glut of herring, right? And none of the sardine factories are buying herring from the purse seiners because they're getting from the weirs and stop sein. And the reason why they're doing that is because – I'm going to give you a little education.

Herring that goes to a sardine factory, if you catch it in a weir or the stop sien, you can leave it a day or two and it can purge so you haven't got that in their stomach. So when it goes to the cannery and it gets canned it doesn't blow up. If you take a fish that's feeding, has poop in 'em and feed, has acid in its stomach, so if you take that and put it in a can to cook it, the belly comes out of it, just blows up. So you have a product that looks horrid, right? And it's not pretty. If you don't have a pretty fish, you don't have a pretty can you don't have no market. That's just the way it is, people don't like that.

So that was going on. So the purse seiners said, "We're not making any money." But over to Eastport they have a pearlescent plant and they're paying like \$26.00 a pound for it or something like that. So they go out at night time, scoop up all these herring, pump them through the boat. They're putting knots on ropes and stuff like maybe there and knock the scales off so they could get the scales. And pump the fish overboard. Well, fish without scales don't live so all these fish that they pumped over die.

And then comes the Japanese. Here's another little story. Then comes along the Japanese and they go to Nova Scotia and they have great spawn fish over there, big herring, a lot of spawn, just ripe. And they pay big bucks for these spawn

herrings. So they scoop up all these herring that have spawn into them and they take them in and they cut them open, take the spawn out of them, and course the male herring, they don't have anything until the very day, so they get thrown away. So after they take the spawn out of them, they took the herring and dumped them in these great big gravel holes and made mountains out of gravel holes, you know what I'm saying? Huge hills. I've seen all this. And so do you suppose them herring, if they were left to have their young, come and turn into herring, how many fish we would have? They took it, wasted a poor old fish, killed it and never have spawn again, never lay eggs again. And won't have juveniles to reproduce again. So then you end up with a great big mess. That's something that we should not and the Canadians should not be allowing to happen.

If they're gonna take the fish, take the fish and take the roe out of it and leave the herring or do something with it to say that that was not born to be garbage, you know what I'm saying?

Interviewer: Um-hmm. So only a couple questions.

Eugene Greenlaw: I'll get back on the other stuff now.

Interviewer: So would you still go fishing if you had your life or career to live over?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yes, I would.

Interviewer: And would you advise young men to enter the fishery?

Eugene Greenlaw: Yes, I grew up with a bunch of old men in the weir business. This is my story. I said to myself, "I could see the future." And I learned as time went on, I see what they did, what they made from mistakes, how I would improve it and everything, so then after awhile the older guys dropped out or died off of whatever. I had all in my mind how they can do this weir fishing business and I accomplished a lot of different things.

On our leader, the older guys, they would just take and put up one big piece of twine like this. All right, and run out to the weir. So this was all one piece so every time we had a damn stall, we was done there seining it up, seining it up. I said, "Look, it doesn't take a whole bunch of knowledge. Why don't we just take and run a top twine and a bottom twine and run up on it later and then we'll do it in sections. So if we tore up, we could take a section and put a section in or take a section out." See what I'm saying? So we started doing that.

So then we carried on to the weir part of it and we've got it fixed so I could take and drop twine here if a storm's coming and drop the top twine down to the middle twine and then do that and I ____ a rope I could take it all back up and we had a storm we wouldn't have to be so entwined and buy a new twine all the time. And it worked. It worked for three or four years until I couldn't afford to put stakes in it myself, stuff like that right there. But it's all upstairs how to do that. And unfortunately it's not doing anybody any good. But anyway that's what you get. Now I'm old.

Interviewer: What do you like most about living here?

Eugene Greenlaw: I like the people. I like the community. I like the fresh air. I like the salt. I like being on the water. And I guess I just like – I don't know, I just love it.

Interviewer:

All right, so that's it for my questions, but are there any other issues that we haven't talked about or that you feel are important to understanding the past, present, or future of this fishing community?

Eugene Greenlaw:

I think I've probably got you pretty well schooled in it. The only thing that – and I mean I love to do it too, I've always done it as a commercial clam digger. As a kid I dug clams so I could buy my clothes going to school, high school ring, graduation stuff and pictures and all that stuff. Poor family and was glad I could clam I guess. But I never could figure out places that I dug when I was a kid. I saw people dig when I was young. I don't know why the clams aren't coming back to the way it used to be. Because there's not as many clam diggers as there was and they always said, "Well, if you don't turn it over," but it's not that.

But it's just there's something. I don't know what it is, but it would be great if someone could put some biologists and – I don't know if it's a feed change or it's stuff that was dumped in the waters from the days of the sardine factories or if it's – we treat our waste. We used to be that we just had sump tanks going into the waters from the homes and stuff here. And between the government, state and everything we have a treatment plant put in. And a lot of these places were supposed to be opened up to clam diggers and I think they've been awful slow coming back. But I can't figure out to me – I had a lot of answers to a lot of questions but I don't understand why clams aren't coming back the way they used to be. There's got to be a reason. We've got beautiful flats here and the tide goes way down, so I would think that if somebody has some biologist stuff in their heads, something for them to do with it, that'd be a great study. Being college people. Mostly that's people interested in that kind of thing.